



November 2005

e – Therapist Bulletin

Insurance Update

Sexual Abuse & Molestation Insurance Requirements: GREAT NEWS--- For Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT) and Speech Therapy (ST), Karen Kittle, Division Director of Program Development and Policy, with the help from Katherine Babonis, Department of Economic Security Procurement Director and Cathie Rodman, Division Procurement Manager was able to convince the Department of Administration that therapists (OT, PT and ST) should **not** be required to carry sexual abuse and molestation insurance. With substantial documentation of no violations in this area and the justification that the three disciplines are under a governing license board, the risk was reclassified, meaning no sexual abuse and molestation insurance is required for OT, PT and ST.

The same justification for other disciplines such as developmental instruction, or habilitation, could not be made since there is no licensing board involved. Insurance coverage will not change for these disciplines.

Contracts and policies will be revised with the following language:

"Therapies shall be delivered according to the consultation/coaching model in a natural environment. The therapist will make every effort to provide services with a family member, caretaker or designee to be present. In circumstances that the service is delivered in a clinic setting the same applies or other personnel may be present in the same clinic. This is not applicable to adult competent clients."

Therapists are still required to have the following insurance coverage:

- **Professional Liability**
- **General Liability**
- **Auto Liability** (Even if consumers are not transported as part of the service, auto liability is required when driving from one point of service to the next.)
- **Worker's Compensation** (Sole proprietors may ask for a waiver.)

The purpose of this Bulletin is to provide news to Therapists from the Division regarding therapy services topics. Articles are written by Karen Kittle, Division Director of Program Development and Policy, in collaboration with Division Administration and Division Business Operations staff.

Contact Karen by email at kkittle@azdes.gov or by phone at 602-364-2855 with questions or comments.

In this issue:

Insurance Update	1
Delivery of Services	2
Rates	2
Focus Training on Authorizations	2
Arizona Early Intervention Program	2
Third Party Liability	3
Progress Reports	3

Continued on page 2

Delivery of Services

Therapy services should not be provided in schools. Any exceptions to this need to be approved by the Division.

Rates

October 11, 2005 Rate Book should be used for all November claims. The Book can be found at <http://www.azdes.gov/ddd/DDDVendorDirectory.asp> under rate book and vendor requirements (v7 section 6-Standard Terms and Conditions).

Note that the interim rate increase did **not** change for all therapy rates, such as mileage, evaluation or group rates.

Survey results from the EPP, Inc. online survey and the results from the recently held focus groups were remarkably similar. The information gathered from the survey and the focus groups will be used to complete the proposed zero based rate modeling that will include productivity, administrative costs, etc. The proposed rates will be made available soon.

Retro-payment: Some technical problems required reloading data during the system conversion. Though this delayed processing the retro payments will be issued this month. The Division apologizes for the delay.

FOCUS Training on Authorizations

Overall the therapists had a good turnout for the three training sessions. Many suggestions have been made that will be reviewed for the new system. Billing training will be coming soon --- watch for that training schedule.



Speech Therapy Requirements Change

Revision to the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) rule, R9-28, Article 5 will soon allow Speech and Language Pathologists to meet the criteria for providing Speech Therapies with either clinical competence certification or equivalent requirements. This broadens the requirements to include a master's degree without having a CCC.

AHCCCS announced on November 8 that their policy will be revised to incorporate the change. The Division will amend their contracts/agreements accordingly. Watch for an implementation date.

Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)

The final public forum will be scheduled in December 2005. This forum will provide an opportunity to comment on the proposed final draft of the service specifications. The date of implementation has been delayed to July 1, 2006 to provide additional time for changes. More specific training has been requested by a number of individuals and AzEIP is currently working with consultants M'Lisa and Dathan to provide this. Access the AzEIP website at www.de.state.az.us/azeip/ for more information.



Third Party Liability (TPL)

We're on the Web!
www.azdes.gov/ddd

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Statewide training for support coordinators and providers has begun. Kim Maldonado, previously the Benefits Coordinator for Districts II, V and VI, with her wealth of knowledge on Third Party Liability (TPL) issues, is now the statewide training coordinator. Kim will routinely work with our Business Operations to keep the training curriculum current. Ongoing emphasis will be on the importance of keeping updated TPL information in the Division's FOCUS system and of following the requirement for a physician's script prior to the consumer's evaluation.

A training manual for support coordinators is being drafted and the billing manual for providers is being updated. The billing manual will be posted on the internet.

Progress Reports

The timeliness of the therapists' Quarterly Progress Reports has become problematic in more than one district. Quarterly Progress Reports for therapists are not only a Division contractual expectation and a federal requirement for Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) consumer members, but also a professional responsibility. The Reports are necessary for authorization of therapy services and the time for completing the Report is included in the rates paid to therapists.

Therapists with the new FOCUS system will have access to updated information on services and contact information for the assigned support coordinator.



Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI & VII), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Department prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability. The Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service or activity. For example, this means if necessary, the Department must

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